



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

Commissioner's Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS TO NEW HISTORIC LOW

HELENA, Mont. --- Montana's unemployment rate dropped 0.3% over the month to 3.4% and established a new low mark in the rate's history. * Employment gains were also strong over the month, with an increase of 3,200 jobs across the state.

"This is the third time in the last five months that the rate has set a record low. In fact, this month's rate is the lowest since the series began in 1976," said Commissioner Keith Kelly.

The Construction sector led the way in employment gains by adding 900 positions. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities followed with an increase of 800 jobs, while Professional and Business Services gained 600. Government added 400 jobs, and Leisure and Hospitality and Education and Health Services** each increased by 300. Other Services** recorded an increase of 100 positions, while Manufacturing, Financial Activities, and Information** saw no change in employment levels. Natural Resources and Mining was the only industry to show a decline in employment, with a loss of 100 positions.

Additional information related to this employment situation press release can be found by visiting the Research and Analysis website at www.ourfactsyourfuture.org

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**Unemployment figures are seasonally-adjusted. Seasonally-adjusted numbers remove the effects of events that follow a more or less regular month-to-month pattern each year. These adjustments make nonseasonal patterns easier to identify. The margin of error for the unemployment rate is plus or minus 0.8 percentage points at the 90 percent confidence level. All questions relating to the calculation of unemployment rates should be directed to Tyler Turner, Economist with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau.*

***These industry sectors are not-seasonally adjusted.*

******* INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET *******

County unemployment rates are also available in our monthly economic bulletin, *Montana Economy at a Glance*, and on our website.

Employment information from the Bureau of Indian Affairs is available on the Department of Labor and Industry web page at:

dli.state.mt.us/resources/articles.asp

The April 2006 Labor Situation Report will be released Friday, May 19, 2006.